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ESSAY

AGAINST

Uncharitableness.

Wherein the Secret Springs of that Vice are traced, and the Mischeivous Effects of it briefly survey'd.

Written

To expose that most Unchristian Iniquity of *Censures, Revilings and Church-Anathemas*, on the Account of doubtful Disputables in Christianity.

Rom. XIV. 3. *Let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth, for God hath received him.*

Luk. IX. 54, 55. *His Disciples said, Lord, wilt thou that we command Fire to come down from Heaven and consume them? But he turned and rebuked them and said, ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.*

By Isaac Watts.

— *Tantæne animis cælestibus iræ?
Tantum Relligio potuit suadere malorum?*

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Uncharitableness.

Charity in the Soul of Man is the very Picture of the God-head, taken as it stands in the fairest Light. Wisdom and Holiness, Power, Sovereignty and Justice are various Features of the Deity: They are indeed his very Nature and Essence; yet the Scripture rather chuses to express, that *God is Love*. The beloved Disciple that lean'd on the Bosom of *Jesus*, took peculiar Delight in the Contemplation of God, under this Character. The other Glories of that infinite Beauty shine with Awful Beams, and command my Reverence: But methinks, I love to look upon so glorious a Being in his most condescending Air, and to converse with him in his mildest and most inviting Aspect. Charity in Man is a Grace of that alluring Sweetness, that my Pen would fain be attempting to sya something in

Favour of it: I find a strange Pleasure in discouraging of this Virtue, hoping that my very Soul may be moulded into its Divine Likeness. I would always feel it inwardly warming my Heart. I would have it look thro' my Eyes continually, and it should be ever ready upon my Lips to soften every Expression of my Tongue. I would dress my self in it as my best Raiment. I would put it on upon my Faith and Hope, as an upper Vesture, constantly to appear in among Men. *For the greatest of these is Charity.* *

Uncharitableness is a loathsome part of the Image of the fallen Angel: It is akin to the Hatred of God. *For he that loveth not his Brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen?* † He that hates his Fellow-Christian, and brings railing Accusations against him for a Difference in little Opinions, how can he expect to be beloved of God, who beholds in the best of us so many monstrous Follies, and Guilt of a more aggravated Nature? Uncharitableness is a Vice attended with such a Train of Mischiefs, that I would set all my biggest Powers in Array to fight against it. 'Tis a Fountain of such bitter Waters, that I would fain dam up the Spring. 'Tis a Plant of so poysonous a Product, that I would dig deep and search for the Roots, and tear up all the Fibres

* 1 Cor. 13. ult. † 1 John 4. 20.

Fibres of it, tho' they twin'd about my Heart-strings.

An Uncharitable Humour springs from some of these following Causes.

First, From a malicious Constitution of Nature, an Acrimonious or a Cholerick Temper of Blood. There are some Animal Engines of Human Flesh, that have their Juices all sower'd in their very Formation; and there is an ill Ferment rais'd in such Persons at the Perception of every Object, that is not just suited to their present Fancy and Inclination: And by the hard Laws of Union between Soul and Body in this our fallen State, the Spirit too often complies with the fretful Distempers of the Flesh. There are but few that attempt to suppress the Ferment, and to resist the angry Motions of the Animal; and of those few that attempt it, scarce One in Ten is very successful: For 'tis a Work of Toil, and Difficulty, perpetual Watchfulness and unceasing Prayer. This ill Humour mixes it self with Religion, as well as with Civil Affairs. It diffuses its Malignity thro' all the Studies and the Manners of the Man, and gives a visible Tincture to his Notions and his Practices. *Furio* can never converse about the calmest and most speculative Points of Divinity, but his Indignation kindles against every different Opinion, his fiery Temper breaks out and blazes, and he bestows on his

his own Deportment the Honourable Names of shining Light and Burning Zeal. His peevish and angry Passions are so blended with his Understanding, that hard Names are his best Arguments, most convincing to himself, tho' they are the just Scorn of the wise. He stabs his Brethren that differ from him to the Heart, with pointed Railing; and from an Aversion to an Opinion rises to an immortal Hatred of the Person. If our great Creator has united any of our Souls to Bodies that are less infected with this vicious Juice, we have Reason to adore his Sovereign Goodness.

Self-Love and Pride, and a vain Conceit of our own Opinions, is another Spring of uncharitable Carriages. Poor foolish Mankind is very prone to esteem it self Wise and Knowing. Little *Laudillus* who is almost always in the wrong, has much ado to perswade himself, that he was ever capable of mistaking. He secretly thinks all his Opinions to be Divine Truths, and therefore he is very lavish in pronouncing Error and Heresy upon every Notion and Practice that differs from his own. He takes the Freedom to chuse a Religion for himself, but he allows no Man besides the same Liberty. He is sure that he has Reason to dissent from others, but no Man has Reason to dissent from him. He sets up for Infallibility without a Triple Crown, and fixes a See of Ecclesiastical Sovereignty on this Side the Water.

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He awes some slavish Spirits into Submission, and they become treacherous to their own Souls and to the Rights of Human Nature, by delivering up their Faith and Consciences to his Imperious Dictates: Then the Man grows haughty, surly and severe: In his inflexible Justice he delivers up the humble and inquisitive Christian unto *Satan*, because he can't *assent and consent to all and every Thing contain'd* in his Scheme; and he teaches perhaps his elder Brethren the Doctrines and Discipline of the Gospel, as *Gideon* did the Elders of *Succoth*, with the Briars and Thorns of the Wilderness.

This Hateful Vice may be deriv'd from a Third Original; and that is a constant and friendly Acquaintance with the Men and Books of our own Opinion; and an Avoidance of all the Writers and Persons that differ from us: This has a mighty Influence to beget and maintain uncharitable Notions; yet this is the constant Practice, not only of the unlearned, but of too many of the learned World. *Hermes* sits all the Year in his own Cell, and never looks abroad beyond the Clan of his own Fraternity: *Hermes* reads the Controversies as they are describ'd only by one Party, and disputes them over only in the Books that are written on one Side. He finds a great Appearance of Argument and Scripture there, and then proclaims it impossible that the adverse Party should
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shew equal Reason or Revelation: And thus he proceeds to censure them as *Men of corrupt Minds, reprobate concerning the Faith, and twisting the Scriptures to their own Damnation*, Cicero in his Treatise *De natura Deorum*, marks this Humour, and brands it, *Vestra solum legitis, vestra amatis, ceteros causa incognita condemnatis*. But let you and I my Friend, who delight in Charity, let us converse a little with Authors that differ from our present Opinions, and we shall see their Sentiments drest up so plausibly, and set in so fair a Light, that might easily perswade Men of sincere Consciences to embrace them; and this will prevent us from censorious Thoughts concerning our candid Adversaries, and their Disciples. There is scarce any Thing that enlarges the Mind more, and more disengages it from narrow and selfish Principles than a free Converse with the Virtuous and Ingenious of all Parties. There is a memorable Story to this Purpose, concerning two Neighbours in an unsociable Town, who were always quarrelling about the private Meeting and the Parish-Church: Both Places of Worship in that Town were well supplied with Preachers of good Sense and serious Religion; but each of 'em was the Subject of unmerciful Reproach between these two Neighbours, whensoever they met, and their different Methods of Worship were mutually reviled; the one as Formal and Spiritless, the other

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as Enthusiastical and indecent: At last *Pacifico* their common Friend perswaded them to hear each others Minister, and accompanied them both one Day to their different Assemblies; and they were both surpriz'd to hear the Gospel preach'd with a due Degree of Decency and Fervour, both at Meeting and at Church: And tho' they continu'd still to adhere to their own Party, as judging it in some Respects suited best to their Edification; yet they maintained hearty Friendship with each other, and delightful Society in religious Conference: Thus the quarrellsom Mistake was rectify'd by better Acquaintance: They lived many Years together in Peace; they compos'd the Animosities of different Parties, that dwelt in the Town; they dy'd in perfect Charity, and left a Sweet Influence behind 'em, and an Honourable Example.

A *Fourth* Spring of Uncharitableness is, our reading the Word of God with a whole Set of Notions establish'd before-hand: And yet how common a Method, and how constant is this? *Diacon* has long ago determin'd that Bishops are superior to Presbyters; He has receiv'd Ordination from Episcopal Hands; and hopes one Day himself to be capable of ordaining others. Thus while he is growing up towards the Mitre, he reads the Scriptures only to confirm his determin'd Opinions. He stretches

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and torments many an unwilling Text, to make it speak the Language of his own Thoughts. He neglects the Passages that favour all other Forms of Government and Methods of Ministration; or else he constrains them to mean Episcopacy too: Every Word that he reads, hath a *Diocesan* Aspect; and the first Verse of *Genesis* can prove Prelacy (for ought I know) as it has been able heretofore to demonstrate *Papacy*, when *In principio creavit Deus cælum & terram*, decided the Controversy, and set the *Pope* above the *Emperour*: For God made all Things from One Beginning, and not from Two. *Synodias* reads the Bible with a *Presbyterian* Glass, and *Fratrio* with a Congregational Optick: They can find nothing there but their own Opinions, and wonder that *Diacion* should not see them too. *Fratrio* turns over the Scriptures with great Diligence and Meditation, and as often as he finds the Word *Church* there, he thinks of nothing but a Congregation of Faithful Men; as the Church of *Jerusalem*, *Alexandria*, and *Antioch* are so many single Congregations. When *Synodias* meets the same Word in his Bible, he is often in the Midst of an Assembly of Divines; and especially when any Power is attributed to the Church, he is sure it must intend a *Classis* of Presbyters, or *Consistory* of Elders. When the same Word falls under the Eye of *Diacion* in his Course of read-

reading the New Testament, he cannot imagine any Thing is meant short of a Diocess: All his Churches are or should be as big as Counties or Shires. And I might add, that when poor *Parochianus* the Mason finds Leisure to read a Chapter, and lights upon the Mention of a Church in it, he thinks immediately of a tall Stone-Building with a Steeple upon it, a Bell or Two, and a Weather-cock. I might give the like Instances of many other Terms and Expressions in Scripture, to which Men have unalterably fix'd their several different Ideas, and rais'd Consequences from them, and interpret the Word of God by them, without enquiring whether their Ideas are conformable to the Sense in which the Scripture uses those Expressions: And then 'tis no Wonder that their Schemes of Ecclesiastical Government are so different: And yet each of these prepossess'd Opiniators think their own Exposition of the Text so evident, that they chide the Perverseness of all other Men, as tho' they were resolv'd to wink against the Light. 'Tis like a Person of a fretful Constitution, whose Eyes are also ting'd with the *Jaundice*, he quarrels with every Man that he meets, because he will not consent to call all Things yellow. Thus by the false Light of Affection in which they behold some beloved Texts, and their Negligence of all others, or at least by the Colours of Prejudice that they throw upon

them, each triumphs in his own Sentiments, and pronounces the Apostles and Prophets of his Side. Then he lets fly many a sharp Invektive against all the Men that presume to oppose him; for in his Sense they oppose the Apostles themselves, and fight against the Authority of God.

But when a Man takes a Bible into his Hand without a pre-conceived Scheme in his Head, and tho' he may make use of Systems to secure himself from Inconsistencies, yet he puts them not in Place of the Holy Scriptures, but resolves to form his Body of Divinity by the New Testament, and derive all his Opinions and Practices thence; he will then find so many Expressions that seem to favour the several contending Parties of Christians, that in some Points he will perhaps be tempted to doubt of all Opinions, and sometimes have much ado to secure himself from the Danger of Eternal Scepticism: When in any doubtful Point his Judgment is led to a Determination, 'tis always with great Caution, and by slow Degrees: He is not carried by Violence to any dogmatical Conclusion; he is modest in his Assertions, and gentle towards all whose Judgment and Conscience have determin'd them another Way, because he met with so many probable Arguments on their Side, in the Time of his Dubitation and Inquiry, that had almost fix'd his Opinion the same Way too.

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If I may be permitted to speak of my self, I might acquaint the World with my own Experience. After some Years spent in the Perusal of Controversial Authors, and finding them insufficient to settle my Judgment and Conscience in some great Points of Religion, I resolv'd to seek a Determination of my Thoughts from the Epistles of St. *Paul*, and especially in that weighty Doctrine of Justification: I perus'd his Letter to the *Romans* in the Original, with the most fixed Meditation, laborious Study, and importunate Requests to God, for several Months together: First without consulting any Commentator, and afterwards call'd in the Assistance of the best Critics and Interpreters. I very narrowly observ'd the daily Motions of my own Mind: I found it very hard to root out old Prejudices, and to escape the Danger of new Ones: I met with some Expressions of the Apostle that sway'd me towards one Opinion, and others that enclin'd the Ballance of my Thoughts another Way; and 'twas no easy Matter to maintain my Judgment in an equal Poise, 'till some Just and Weighty Argument gave the Determination; so many crossing Notions, perplexing Difficulties and seeming Repugnances lay in my Way, that I most heartily bless the Divine Goodness that enabled me at last to surmount them all, and establish'd my Judgment and Conscience in that

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glorious and forsaken Doctrine of the Justification of a Sinner in the Sight of God, by the Imputation of a perfect Righteousness which is not originally his own. From my own Experiment I can easily guess what confounding Intricacies of Thought others pass thro' in their honest Searches after Truth. These Conflicts did exceedingly enlarge my Soul, and stretch'd my Charity to a vast Extent. I see, I feel, and am assur'd that several Men may be very sincere, and yet entertain Notions in Divinity, all widely different. I confess now and then some Opinions, or some unhappy Occurrences are ready to narrow and confine my Affections again, if I am not watchful over my self; but I pray God to preserve upon my Heart a strong and lasting Remembrance of those Days and those Studies, whereby he laid within me the Foundation of so broad a Charity.

Fifthly. Another Cause of Uncharitableness is a Want of Reflection on the Grounds of our own Opinions. We should be more just to our selves, and more gentle to others, if we did but impartially review the Reasons why we first embrac'd our several Principles and Practices. Perhaps 'twas Education determin'd most of them, then let us chide our selves severely for building upon so careless and slight a Bottom: Or let us be civil to the greatest
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part of Mankind, who came by all their Principles the same Way. Perhaps we were led into particular Notions by the Authority of Persons whom we reverence or love; then we should not upbraid our Neighbours that have been influenced into different Sentiments by the same Springs. Perhaps we have felt Interest sometimes ready to byass our Thoughts and give us a secret Inclination, or Aversion to a Party; Let us then pity the Frailty of Human Nature, and have Compassion upon Men whose Judgments are expos'd to so mean a Bribery, and sometimes have been warp'd aside from the Truth. Or finally, perhaps deep Meditation, a daily Search into Scripture, and fervent Prayer were the Methods by which we pursu'd Knowledge, and establish'd our Principles upon solid Reason. Let us then be so charitable to those whom we contend with, as to suppose they sought after Truth the same Way, and then our Contentions will have less of Fire and Spleen in them, less of Clamour and Indignation against those that differ from us. The true Reason why we kindle our Anger against our Christian Brethren that are not intirely of our Party is because we not only have the Vanity to fancy our selves always in the Right, and them in the Wrong; but we judge their Consciences and their Sincerity too, that they did not come honestly and fairly by their

their Principles, while we never consider how we our selves came by our own.

But there are still more Ways to arrive at this Uncharitable Temper: I must proceed to *Sixthly*; which is a common Method, and thus to be performed. If we will but trace the Principles of those that dissent from us thro' all the Length of remote and feeble Consequences, and be sure to find some terrible Absurdity at the End of them, we shall not easily maintain our Charity. O how often do we put their Opinions upon the Rack! we torture every Joynt and Article of them, 'till we have forc'd them to confess some formidable Errors which their Authors never knew or dream'd of: Thus the Original Notions appear with a frightful Aspect, and the Sectators of them grow to be the Object of our Abhorrence, and have forfeited their Right to every Grain of our Charity. *Evangillo* believes that *Christ Jesus* has compleatly answer'd the Demands of the Law in Order to our Justification, and that in the Room and Stead of all Believers. *Nomineus* hears this Doctrine, and thus begins his Chain of severe and false Deductions; then (saith he) the Law has no Power to demand Obedience of us, then we are not to be charg'd with Sin; tho' we break the Law hourly and profanely; then we may contemn all the Commands, sport with the Threatnings, and defy God the Law-giver and the Avenger. He proceeds

ceeds then to pronounce *Evangello* a wicked *Antinomian*, and in the Name of the Lord delivers him up to Satan, that he may learn not to blaspheme. *Evangello* on the other Hand (who has been well instructed in the Way of Salvation, and has learn'd the Duties of Faith and Hope, but is not yet so well improv'd in the Charity of the Gospel) hears *Nomineus* preaching up Repentance and sincere Obedience, as the Conditions or our Justification and Acceptance with God to Eternal Life: He smites his Breast with his Hand, and cries, surely this Man knows no Use of Christ in our Religion, he makes void his Righteousness and his Death, he is a meer Legalist, a Papist, a rank Socinian, he preaches another Gospel, and tho' he were an Angel from Heaven let him be accursed. Thus when Men dress up their Neighbours in all the strain'd Consequences of their Opinions, with a Malicious Pleasure they pursue this Thread of Argument, they impose horrid Conclusions which can never be drawn from their Doctrines, and never leave the Pursuit 'till they have push'd each other to Blasphemy and Damnation,

Whereas if the Doctrines and the Persons now mentioned were put into the Ballances of Truth and Charity, perhaps the Principles of *Evangello* would be found to have most Weight of Scripture on their Side, and *Nomineus* more of the fair Shews of Reasoning: But neither

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the one would be found to throw Christ out of his Religion, nor the other to make void the Law: And both of their Lives would appear shining in Holiness, but that they want the bright Garments of Charity.

Let me name a Seventh Spring of this Uncharitable Humour; and that is, when we magnify Circumstantial Differences into Substantial ones, and make every Punctilio of our own Scheme a Fundamental Point, as tho' all the Law and the Prophets hung upon it, as tho' it were the Ground and Pillar of all the Truth in the Gospel. *Crucius* will not allow his dissenting Neighbour to be a Member of the Christian Church, because he separates from the Modes of Worship in the Church of *England*; he can't believe him to be a Friend to Christ crucified because he refuses to have his Child baptiz'd with the Airy Sign of the Cross. Again the dissenting Neighbour pronounces *Crucius* to be a meer Formalist, and to have nothing of the Spirit of God in him, because he seeks not much to obtain the Gifts of the Spirit, and scarce ever addresses himself to God in Prayer without the Assistance of a Form. *Sabbaptes* that lives within two Doors of them will not believe either of his Neighbours to be a Christian, because they have never been plung'd under Water, (*i. e.*) in his Sense they were never baptiz'd: And both of them in Requital agree to call *Sabbaptes* a Jew because he worships only on a Satur-

Saturday. Whereas the All-knowing God looks down into all their Hearts, beholds the Graces that his Spirit hath wrought there, owns them all for his Children and the Disciples of his Son, tho' they are not yet perfect in Love. They have all one common God and Father, one Lord Jesus, one Faith, one Spirit of Prayer, one Baptism, tho' they quarrel so bitterly about Times, and Modes, and Forms.

'Tis a very uncharitable Practice to think that a Man can never journey safely to Heaven unless his Hat and Shoes be of the same Colour with ours, unless he tread the very Track of our Feet, and his Footsteps too be of the same Size. 'Tis a censorious and perverse Fancy to pronounce a Man no Christian because every Thought of his Soul, and all the Atoms of his Brain are not just rang'd in the same Posture with mine. How ridiculously unreasonable is it for a Man of brown Hair to shut his Brother out from the Rank and Species of Men, and call him an Ox or a Lion because his Locks are black or yellow. I am perswaded there is a Breadth in the narrow Road to Heaven, and Persons may travel more than Seven a Breast in it: And tho' they do not trace precisely the same Track, yet all look to the same Saviour Jesus, and all arrive at the same Common Salvation: And tho' their Names may be cross'd out of the Records of a particular Church on Earth,

Earth, where Charity fails, yet they will be found written in the Lamb's Book of Life, which is a Record of Eternal Love, and shall for ever be joyn'd to the Fellowship of the Catholick Church in Heaven.

This Iniquity of Uncharitableness has more Springs than there are Streams or Branches belonging to the great River of *Egypt*; and 'tis as fruitful of Serpents and Monsters too: It self is a *Hydra* of many Heads; I have drawn Seven of them out at Length into open Light, that they may be cut off for ever: But there are others still remain as full of Fire and Infection. The Applause of a Party, and the Advance of Self-Interest has a mighty Prevalence over the Hearts and Tongues of Men, and inflames them with Malice against their Neighbours: They assault every different Opinion with Rage and Clamour: They rail at the Persons of all other Parties to ingratiate themselves with their own; and when they find their Account in it, their Tongues are sharpened as drawn Swords; they fight for Honour like young Volunteers, or like the *Switzers* for Pay. When they tear away Men from their Habitations, cast 'em into noysom Prisons, and put to Death the Ministers of the Gospel, they boast like *Jehu* when he slew the Priests of *Baal*, *Come and see my Zeal for the Lord*: And as he design'd hereby to establish the Kingdom in his own Hands, so they to maintain the

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Preferments and Possessions, as well as the Reputation they had acquir'd among their own Sect. But ah! How little do they think of the Wounds that *Jesus* the Lord receives by every bitter Reproach they cast on his Followers! Nor will it be found a sufficient Reason for the Persecution of them one Day, that they did not conform to Human Inventions. The *Jansenists* in *France* have made some Reformation in the Doctrines of *Papery*, and they have been sometimes traduc'd for approaching the Tents of *Calvin*: They have been in Danger of being degraded and losing their Spiritual Dignities, and they are push'd on by this Fear and Ambition, to write at every Turn some severe Invectives against the *Calvinists*, to shew that themselves are true Sons of that uncharitable Church of *Rome*. *Sicco* has lately departed from a *Baptist* Society, and he hardly thinks himself sufficiently come out of the Water, till he is kindled into a Flame against all those that baptize by Immersion; he rails at his former Brethren to make the *Presbyterian* and *Independent* Churches believe that he is a true Convert: How art thou mistaken poor *Sicco*, to attempt this Method of caressing thy new Acquaintance? For they had rather receive a *Baptist* into their Fellowship, whose Faith and Holiness are conspicuous in his Life than open their Door to an uncharitable Wretch that proves his Conversion only by the Change of an Opinion,

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and places his Religion in Railing. *Acerbion* has left the Communion of his Fathers, and is become an Ecclesiastic in a more gowerful and splendid Church: He never puts a Volume into the Press without Sowness and hard Words in it, against the Society which he has forsaken: His Pen is dipt in Gall daily, and he grows old in Malice and Censure: 'Tis Pity he should so far expose the Church to which he now belongs, as to think that she will esteem him a more dutiful Son, by how much the less Charity he has for his dissenting Brethren. And I am sorry also, that there should be a Church in *Europe* which has devoted Christians to the Devil for little Differences, and has expos'd them to tedious and sharp Sufferings for refusing to submit to particular Gestures in Worship and Airy Signs, for wearing a short Garment in Prayer in the Place of a long one, or black instead of white; and some of her Sons have delighted to execute these Censures, when they have found much Gain arising from this severe Godliness. I could wish she had always exercis'd the same Charity to weak Consciences that she does to slender Purfes; for she allows a Christian Liberty to poor *Beneficed Men and Curates*, not being able to provide themselves long Gowns, that they may go in short ones.

The most common Cause of Uncharitableness, and the Last I shall mention, is, That a
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great part of the Professors of our holy Religion, make their Heads the chief Seat of it, and scarce ever suffer it, to descend and warm their Hearts. *Jesus* the Saviour has been discover'd to them in a good degree of outward Light, but has never been reveal'd in them with Power, nor their Souls changed by Divine Grace into the Image of the Gospel. While they boast of their Orthodox Faith they forget their Christian Love. *Stellio* has stuck his Brain all over with Notions, and fancies his higher Sphere sufficiently illuminated for the Conduct of Mankind, that's round about him, and beneath him : But this Set of Notions is like a Winter-night overhung with Stars; bright and shining, but very cold. Natural Affections have no Room in his Soul, 'tis too much Spiritualiz'd with Opinions and Doctrines. His Divinity lies all in his Understanding, and the common Dutys of Humanity scarce ever employ his Tongue or his Hands. If a Man does but profess every Tittle of his Creed, and believe just as *Stellio* believes, he is declared fit for Holy Communion; and if he will but dispute warmly for the hard Words that distinguish his Scheme, and can pronounce *Shibboleth* well, he shall not be adjudg'd to Death or Damnation, but joyn'd heartily to the Fellowship of the Saints, tho' his flaming Immoralitys proclaim him a Son of *Satan* : *Satan* himself has perhaps a more accurate and
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nice Skill of the Controversies of Divinity than
 the best of our Professors and Doctors have
 arriv'd at; but his Pride and Malice are Chains
 of Darkness, and make a Devil of him in
 spight of all his Knowledge: Yet *Stellio* affects
 too near a Resemblance to *Lucifer*, that fallen
 Son of the Morning. Vices that are odious to
 Humane Nature, and wild Licentiousnesses of
 a bitter Tongue which destroy all civil Soci-
 ety, are very little Faults in his Opinion, when
 put into the Ballance with Orthodoxy and
 Zeal. If my Conversation among Men be
 blameless and honourable, If my Practice
 consist of Virtue and Piety, If I profess a
 solemn Faith in Christ the Eternal Son of
 God, that dy'd to make a true Attonement
 for the Sins of Men, and testifie my unfeigned
 Subjection to him, and declare the Grounds
 of my Hope; yet I must not be admitted
 to the special Parts of Worship where *Stellio*
 presides, because I am not arrived at his
 degree of Light, and differ from his Expressi-
 ons a little, when I explain the Words *Justifi-*
cation and the *Covenant*. His Lips are ever
 full of Declamation and Controversy, and he
 harangues copiously upon the most affecting
 Points of our Religion; he talks much of the
 amazing Condescensions of Divine Mercy, and
 of the Kindness and Love of God our Saviour
 towards Man; but it has not yet taught him
 Love to his Fellow-Creatures, nor Kindness
 towards

towards his Brethren. He reverses the Dutys of Christianity which St. Paul describes, *he speaks evil of all Men but his own Party, he is a Brawler and ungentle, shewing meekness unto none; and while he pretends that the Grace of God which brings Salvation has appeared unto him, he lives still in malice and envy, and wears the visible Characters of the Men of Heathenism; hateful and hating one another, 2 Tit. 11, 12. 3 Tit. 2, 3, 4.* He flourishes and enlarges upon the gracious Qualities of our Redeemer, our great High-Priest, who is *touch'd with the feeling of our Infirmities*; yet himself has not learnt from so glorious an Example to *have compassion on them that are ignorant and out of the way*; but rather being exalted in his own Knowledge, he condemns *his weak Brother to perish, for whom Christ died.* Take thy Bible, O vain Man, and read a few Lines in the 8th Chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to Corinth. *Knowledge puffeth up, but Charity edifieth; and if any Man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know; but if any Man love God, the same is known of him.* And St. John will assure thee, *That he that loveth not his Brother knoweth not God, and if a Man say I love God and hateth his Brother, he is a liar.* 1 John 4. 8, 20.

Yet let not any think that I advance Charity so high as to place it in the room of Knowledge and Faith, or to make it a self-sufficient Ground for our Admittance into Hea-

von at last : Nor can I suppose it alone to be a sufficient Plea for a Reception into any visible Church of Christ on Earth. A Confession of the Name of *Jesus*, a Declaration of my Personal Faith or Trust in him, together with a solemn Dedication of my self unto the Lord may be justly required of me by that Christian Society into which I desire Admittance. In default of these the biggest Instances of Charity will never constitute me a Christian : *Except ye believe that I am he, saith our Saviour, ye shall die in your sins. John 8. 24. If a Man strive for a prize, yet is he not crowned unless he strive lawfully ; (i. e.) according to the Methods prescribed in the Gospel, the Knowledge and the Faith of the Son of God, 2 Tim. 2. 5. and the Sentence of our Lord is dreadful and peremptory. He that believeth not shall be damned, Mark 16. 16. With the Heart Man believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto Salvation, Rom. 10. 10. But without Charity my Faith can never be true, for it must be such a Faith as worketh by Love, and discoversit self by all the Fruits of the Spirit, Long-suffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Meekness, Temperance, Gal. 5, 6, 22.*

Thus far have we traced the Vice of Uncharitableness upwards in its several Springs and Causes. Now, if my Reader is not quite out of Breath, I would ask him to take another Turn with me, and walk down to a short Survey

vey of its mischievous Effects ; that we may be more warmly animated to pursue this Iniquity to the Death : If it were possible, we would leave it neither Root nor Branch, Name or Memory in the Christian World.

The first and most obvious Mischiefs I meet with amongst Christians of an uncharitable Humour, are the constant Disquiet of their own Spirits, the Vexation they give their Neighbours, the Injury they do to their own Edification, and to the Edification of all that converse with them. *Singulario* has a Set of Notions and Rules whereby he adjusts his own Creed and his Practice ; and whatsoever he hears in Religious Conference or in publick Duty that does not precisely square to his Model, disquiets his Ears, disrelishes with his Taste, disturbs his Conscience, and thus prevents all the Benefit that his Soul should receive from the Discourse, or Worship. I grant it very lawful for a Man to be disgusted with a Sermon, where the greatest part is spent in Notions contrary to his Judgment, and dressed up in Language very foreign to his usual way of Converse about Divine Things ; this is shocking to the Spirit of the best of Christians, and the Conscience is so nauseated with the largest part of the Entertainment that his Soul cannot be nourished, and 'tis proper for him to forbear Attendance upon such a Preacher, and chuse one more suited to the Temper of

his own Spirit. But *Singulario* hath an Aversion to a whole Hour's Discourse, because there were three Sentences of a strain different from his Opinion. He reaps no Blessing from a Sermon of excellent Composure, of Divine Materials, of an Evangelick Frame and just Method, because there's one Expression in it that is the Characteristick of another Sect. He sits uneasy under a noble Discourse of Justification or of Faith, because (it may be) the Minister doth avoid the Terms *Imputed*, *Meritorious*, *Condition*, and *Instrument*; and mentions none of the tortur'd Words of Noise and Party. I will not indeed commend a Preacher that is always affecting to disguise his own Opinions, and for ever hiding himself in ambiguous Language, and that in Points of Moment, thereby to maintain the everlasting Applause of all sides. But I must chide *Singulario* for the wry Faces he makes at Church when he hears but a Word or two of contrary Sound, or when his Ears miss and long for a Sett of darling Phrases. Three Years ago I was in Company with *Acharissa*, a sowe old Christian of a very narrow Spirit, and gave her a gentle Admonition for the frequent Reproaches she cast on the Ministers of Christ that did not preach exactly according to her Humour; I blamed that petulant Liberty which she took with all her Neighbours and Acquaintance, to censure them severely for every lesser difference of Practice

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or Worship: I recommended to her reading that valuable Sermon of the Reverend Dr. *Tillotson* against Evil-speaking; but I could not persuade her to peruse those few Pages, not only because of that strong Propensity she had to speak evil of others, but because 'twas the Work of an Arch-Bishop; which sort of " Office, said she, is a meer Humane Invention, " and the Scripture knows it not. *Sequilla* hath ever given up the Conduct of her Soul to the Curate of her Parish, and after many Years Attendance on his Ministry, in great Security of Conscience is well assur'd that she shall go to Heaven at last. Perhaps by some terrible Providence, or by some plain Word of Scripture she is awaken'd to a deep and frightful Sense of Sin, and Danger of Eternal Death. She is visited by the Curate, and tho' he saith some good things to her, yet she finds not the Way of Peace. A kind Neighbour recommends to her some Book of Consolation written by a Dissenter, but she refuses the Book and the Comfort at once, lest she should be guilty of that damnable Sin of Separation from the Church. " How can I ever, said she, expect the Peace of God from the Pen of a " Schismatick? And thus endures the Racks of Conscience rather than she will indulge Charity enough to hear or to read what a Nonconformist hath written. *Presbicolo* heard a Sermon lately and commended it above measure, confess'd

ses'd how much Light and Love was kindled in his Heart by it, and bestow'd unusual Strains of Respect upon the Minister: But *Presbicolo* (said I) " This Man never had the Hands of " a Bishop or Elder laid upon his Head: At once I saw his Colour change, his Spirits sink, and he concluded that all the Divine Affections in his Soul under that Sermon must needs be counterfeit, " because now I know (said he) the " Preacher is no Minister of Christ. O the wretched Influence of this Vice of Uncharitableness upon feeble and deluded Souls! It proceeds so far at last as to make Persons scrupulous of attending upon any Ordinance, lest the Administrator should not be a Man exactly of their Stamp. Thus their Hearts are vex'd with everlasting Disquiet, for they can hardly hear a Prayer, or an Exhortation, but they find some Offence in it; like a Man with a Thorn in his Hand, whatsoever he takes hold of gives him Pain, but the Cause lies in his own Flesh.

There are other Instances of this Kind to be met with in the World. *Nitidelli* wears his Hair Three Inches below his Shoulders, and 'tis ever well beautified with Powder: He frequently eats of a Dish of Food where Blood is One of the Ingredients, and he often takes half a Pint of red Wine to his own Share: He maintains serious Religion at Home and abroad: But *Censorina* cannot joyn with him in the special Ordinances of Worship. " It is a Shame
" for

“ for him (she cries) to wear long Hair; he is
 “ a Wine-bibber, and he abstains not from
 “ Blood; nor can I be reconciled to him upon
 “ any Terms, unless he retrench these horrible
 “ Excesses. But he still goes on careless and re-
 gardless of the Peace of his Fellow-Christian,
 and scorns her little Clamours, rather than en-
 deavours by Gentleness or Compliance to sa-
 tisfie or remove them. *Now walkest thou not*
charitably, O Nitidelli, for thou grievest thy Si-
ster with thy Meat and Garments, for whom
Christ dyed. But I would fain have *Censorina*
 learn also *that the Kingdom of God is not Meat*
and Drink, but Righteousness and Peace, and Joy
in the Holy Ghost. Both of you therefore ought
 to follow after the Things which make for Peace,
 and Things wherewith one may edifie another.*

Nor is this Mischief confin'd to single Per-
 sons: it makes a farther Progress still, and In-
 fects the Neighbour and Acquaintance. Every
Monday in the Evening *Crites* sits at the Head
 of a Club that meet together to arraign and sen-
 tence the Sermons of the foregoing Day. “ Did
 “ you mark, my Friends, such an Expression un-
 “ der the Fourth Head? It sounded harsh in my
 “ Ears. Surely the Man is not Orthodox, pray
 “ acquaint your Families of the Danger of his
 “ Opinions, and forbid their Attendance. Tru-
 “ ly, replies *Momion*, he insisted so much on the
 “ Grace

* Rom. 14. 15, 17, 19.

“ Grace of God, that he left but one quarter
 “ of his Hour-Glass for the Duties of the Gos-
 “ pel; I fear he's a *Supralapsarian*, my Spirit
 “ rises against him, and I must warn my Ac-
 “ quaintance of his Doctrine. A third Person
 in the Company begins to surmise that his Mo-
 rals are not good: “ I have heard an ill Story
 “ of a Preacher not long since, saith he, and
 “ surely this must be the Man? And then he
 proceeds in a direct Opposition to the Grace
 of Charity, as it is described by St. Paul,
 1 Cor. 12. 5. Tit. 3. 3. “ I easily believe
 “ all that is evil of him; I'm provok'd at
 “ him; I hope no Good from him; I cannot
 “ bear his Principles; I cannot endure his Per-
 “ son; and I should rejoyce *in the seasonable*
 “ *Death of such an Antinomian as this is.* Thus
 does the Root of Bitterness spring up into wide
 Branches, it bears poysonous Fruit, and ma-
 ny Souls are troubled. Blessed be God who of
 late Years begins to purge out this sowre Lea-
 ven from amongst us.

The next pernicious Effect I take Notice of,
 is, that an uncharitable Carriage brings a Dis-
 grace and Blemish upon Christianity, beyond
 the Guilt and Scandal of Heathenism: 'Tis the
 Character of the Gentiles indeed, that they
 were † *hateful and hating one another*; but not
 for different Principles of Philosophy which
 they profess'd, nor different Methods of Wor-
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ship, which they paid to their Gods. There were no Civil Wars proclaim'd, nor Courts of Inquisition erected amongst them upon this Account, tho' their Controversies about Divine Things were not trivial, and they differ'd widely in the very Foundations of Religion; and as an ingenious Author expresses himself on this Subject, *Tho' Poets have made the Gods enter into Factions and Quarrels for Commonwealths, yet Commonwealths never did the same for their Gods*: But if the Heathens had been never so much inrag'd, and quarrel'd never so fiercely for the Sake of Opinions, and Formalities; still they were almost infinitely more excusable than Christians can pretend to be: For the very Doctrines of most of their Sects permit Revenge; and they have many a bloody Principle amongst them. But Christianity is the most mild, the most gentle, and the most peaceable Religion: Never a Doctrine was taught amongst Mankind, that hath so much of Love and Sweetness in it. Never a System, or Rule of Duties, wherein Meekness and Candor, Charity and Compassion are so prescribed, and enforced. Never was there a Religion instituted by God or invented by Men, with so much Goodness in the Heart and Soul of it, or so many Charms and Amiablenesses in the Face. 'Tis built upon the Foundation of God's Eternal and Unchangeable Love. 'Twas Love that assum'd Human Nature, and became the great Pro-

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phet and Teacher of it, and the Spirit of Love in our Hearts is its Vital Spring within us : 'Tis Divine Love dwelling in Flesh, hanging upon a Cross, bleeding and dying for Enemies and Rebels that hath purchas'd all the promis'd Blessings of our Religion ; And 'tis the same Love arising from the Grave, and reigning in Glory, that distributes these Blessings to Men : And in all the melting Language of Compassion and Tenderness invites us to receive them : 'Twas this Love dwelling personally amongst Men calls himself our Brother, and charges us to love all the Professors of the same Faith as Brethren : He requires that we should be ready to lay down our Lives for one another, as he did for us all : And orders it to be the distinguishing Character of all his Followers, *Hereby shall all Men know, that ye are my Disciples, if ye love one another.* * God himself is infinite and unseen Love, Christ is Love incarnate and visible : And a Christian is an Effigies of that Love graven to the Life by the Finger of the Divine Spirit. Now, for the Professors of such a Doctrine to quarrel about Trifles, and grow malicious upon every Punctilio of different Sentiments, how grossly do they abuse the Christian Name ? They rob their own Religion of its due Honour amongst Men, and bring infinite Shame and Discredit upon
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* John 13. 34, 35.

Christianity in the Face of Infidel Nations. 'Tis for the Sake of this Madness which is found amongst the pretended Followers of our blessed Lord, his Name is blasphemed amongst the Heathens; and the Conversion of the Kingdoms of this World to the Faith of *Christ* render'd almost rationally impossible.

Thirdly, This uncharitable Temper rages even to Wars and Blood; hath laid the Churches of Christ desolate, and dispeopled many Countries in *Christendom*. It doth not spend it self in secret like a sullen Humour, or a Vapour of Melancholy, but breaks out into publick Violence and Disorder, and all that's near it feels the Indignation. It sits brooding over the Eggs of a Cockatrice, and daily sends forth a fiery flying *Serpent*, *Instruments of Cruelty* are in its *Habitation*, and all its Children are Sons of Blood and Rapine. *O my Soul, come thou not into their Council; Unto their Assembly mine Honour be not thou united; for in their Anger they have slain Millions of Men, and in their Self-will they have diged up the Foundations of a Thousand Churches. Cursed be their Anger for it is fierce, and their Wrath for it is cruel.* These Men of Division at the last Judgment Day, may justly expect to be divided from *Jacob*, and to be scatter'd far away from the *Israel of God*. *For God will render to every one according to their Works.* And surely these bloody Persecutions are such

Works as demand like Revenges from a God of Justice; if such as practice them dye without Repentance. If you ask me the Method whereby this Uncharitable Temper has advanced to such a Degree of Rage and Barbarity, 'tis very obvious and easy to be explain'd. At first these Men assume to themselves the Name of the Church, and lodge in themselves a Sort of Infallibility, or at least pretend to a Divine Authority to determine finally all doubtful Cases of Religion, and to rule over the Consciences of Men. They set up the wretched Trade of Creed-making, and demand the Belief of Mankind: Then they give out Decrees, such as *Christ* and his Apostles never gave, and pronounce Damnation against all that doubt or disbelieve them; Tho' their Fables are not cunningly devised, because they are made too big for Belief. Some of them contradict the most substantial Principles of Sense, Reason and Christianity. As, *Whosoever shall affirm that there are more or less than Seven Sacraments, let him be anathematiz'd, excommunicated, or accursed: Whosoever shall affirm that the Substance of Bread and Wine remains in the Eucharist, together with the Body and Blood of Christ, or shall deny the wonderful Change of the whole Substance of Bread into Body, and Wine into Blood, which the Catholick Church calls Transubstantiation. let him be excommunicated: Whosoever shall say, that extreme Uncti-*

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on doth not confer Grace, nor remit Sin, nor ease the sick, let him be excommunicated. Thus oftentimes the same Anathema and eternal Death is denounced against such as disobey their Decrees about Matters of trifling Importance; Matters which they themselves can never pretend to be in their own Nature necessary to Salvation. He that shall say a common Minister can confirm as well as a Bishop, let him be excommunicated: He that shall say, the Ceremonies, the Vestments, &c. in the Celebration of the Mass, are Incentives to Sin, rather than Duties of Piety, let him be excommunicated: He that shall say, a Priest may become a Lay-man again, let him be excommunicated: And whosoever shall say that the Hierarchy of Bishops, Presbyters, and Ministers or Deacons is not of Divine Ordination, let him be excommunicated. When this Church has thus excommunicated and cursed Christians better than her self, and cast them out of her Arms; She gives them up to the secular Power with an Awful and Deceitful Charge, that the obstinate Heretick shall not be hurt in Life or Limb; but with a full Design that they should be tortur'd, and destroy'd. Having solemnly deliver'd them to the Devil in their Spiritual Courts, the Temporal Executioner sends them out of the World; not that their Souls may be saved in the Day of the Lord, but that they may be plung'd immediately into utter Darknes, where Satan dwells.

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'Tis the Command of *Christ* to the *Roman Church* by *Paul* the great Apostle, * *That such as were weak in the Faith should be received to their Fellowship, and not troubled with doubtful Disputations*, such as the Observance of Meats and Days, and Things of like Moment: But the *Romans* have now so far rebell'd against this Rule, as to admit Persons into their Communion upon no other Terms than a blind Submission to all the doubtful Disputables which that Church imposes. They had an Order from *St. Paul*, † *to receive all such as Christ had receiv'd*; and consequently to reject no others but those whom *Christ* rejects; but they forgot this charitable Canon of our Lord, while they recieve Thousands to their Communion which have no visible Marks of the Image of *Christ*, and reject Thousands, and curse them to Hell, whom the *Lord Christ* will acknowledge for his, and pronounce them blessed of his Father at the Last Day. When they first begin to assume this Sovereignty over Faith and Conscience, they use a Shew of Argument, and pretend to instruct and enlighten the weak and the ignorant. They admonish them to hearken to the Church; but if the ignorant are still weak in Belief, and cannot be convinc'd of the Lawfulness of Human Ceremonies; then they send the Sheriff and the

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* Rom. 14. 1. † Rom. 15. 7.

Jaylor to carry on the Dispute, a Prison and the Gibbet are the next Arguments; and when Reason and Scripture will not assist them, they employ Fire and Sword to *contend earnestly for the Fables that were never delivered to the Saints.*

To draw up an Account of the horrible Effects of Uncharitableness would be to transcribe the Ecclesiastical History of many Ages: Whole Churches and Quarters of the World, the Eastern and Western have damn'd one another plentifully upon the Account of imposed Days, and Trifles which the Gospel leaves indifferent, or rather forbids; How many of the Canons of Antient Councils have been influenc'd in their Formation by this assuming Spirit, and as terribly enforc'd in their Execution to the Reproach and Devastation of *Christianity*? But it moves my Grief and Wonder that a Modern Church that pretends not to Infallibility should assume a strange Dominion over our Faith and Practice. It asserts its own *Power to decree Rites and Ceremonies, and Authority in Controversies of Faith*; when in the very preceeding Words it confesses, that *the Churches of Jerusalem, Alexandria, and Antioch have erred, so also the Church of Rome has erred, not only in their Living and Manner of Ceremonies, but also in Matters of Faith.* It demands my Admiration, that such a Church should canonically denounce her Excommunications in

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Abundance against those that dissent from her in some disputable Things, while they retain all her professed Doctrines of the Christian Faith. And 'tisa Pain and a Shame to our Eyes to look backward upon other Times, and to behold Pamphlets written against Toleration by such as are Ministers of the Gospel of Peace, that perfect Law of Liberty. 'Twas their Opinion then, (and they told the World so in Print) that Sectaries ought to be silenced by the Civil Power: Now Sectary is a Name of broad Dimensions, and has a terrible Stretch with it; The long Scourge would in Time reach all those who differ from the Hand that manages that Weapon of Chastisement: None must be authorized to preach but by the Solemnity of imposing Hands: Because some subjected themselves to the Determination of a Synod, they would make it the Duty of their Neighbours to wear the same Yoke; and thought others were bound to become Slaves to the same Dictates. But I forbear this Charge, and almost wish it cancell'd: For as the Magistrate did not put in Practise the Uncharitable Pamphlets; so those Reverend and Honourable Writers have been taught to acknowledge the Mistake of their Zeal, when their own verbal Rods have been turned against them, and became real Scorpions with Stings and Scourges a Thousand-fold. The Fathers have been dearly instructed in the Value of Toleration and Liberty by most abundant

dant Retaliations. The Children have learn'd to preach this Part of the Gospel well, and I'm perswaded they'll never forget it again. If we turn over more ancient Annals, the *Marian* Days give us horrible Examples of fiery Zeal in the Clergy, and the Glorious Reign of the succeeding Virgin-Princess is hardly to be purged from the Stain of Blood. Blessed be God who has put into the Heart of our Civil Governours to restrain the Fury of all Administrators. The long and dreadful Train of Capias's and Goalers, Prisons and Plunderings, Ruin and Banishment, Silencings and violent Suppressions are no longer the Attendants of the Anathemas of any Church among us. And I hope no Church mourns the Loss of them; tho' there are some Anathemas that abide still as Terrors to those that are weak in Faith, and not very honourable Monuments of that Church's Charity. In these late Years the Scene of *Great Britain* was a little Shadow of *Spain* and *France*, where Dragoons and the Inquisition manage Ecclesiastical Discipline. We were brought to the very Gates of *Aeldama*. The Agents of *Rome* were ready with their Instruments of Death. Adored be the Divine Spirit that awaken'd the Rulers of the Church to behold the Common Danger, and rais'd in them generous Resolutions and Promises to exercise Charity and Temper towards their Brethren. Glory to that God whose kind Providence sent us a Deliverer, and forbid

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England to become a Field of Blood and Martyrdom: And new Songs of Praise are still due unto Divine Mercy for establishing the Person and Heart of our Queen in the Throne and the Principles of so glorious an Example and Predecessor. Her gentle Government subdues the Hearts of all her People to her self; Her Charity joyns their Affections to one another; Her Parental Care and Love reconciles Christian Parties, and her Wisdom unites Christian Nations.

The Last Mischief I shall mention, and which should fright us terribly from the Peril of it, is, That an uncharitable Man wounds the very Vitals of that Religion by which he hopes for Eternal Life: And whilst his Fury rages against his Brother for accidental Differences, he shakes the very Foundations of his own Christianity, and endangers or prevents his own Salvation; his boasted Orthodoxy in Opinion is made vain while his practical Ungodlinesses are so real; and his Faith appears to be little better than that of Devils, when he mingles so much of their Malice with it. In vain does he glory in the Brightness of his Notions; in vain doth he presume *Darkness is past, and the true Light now shineth: For he that sayeth he is in the Light and hateth his Brother, he abides in Darkness, even till now.** Such a Wisdom compos'd of Notion and Wrath can never lead aright up to Hea-

* 1 John 2. 8, 9.

Heaven, for it did not descend from thence : *The Wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be intreated, full of Mercy and good fruits, without Partiality, and without Hypocrisy, and the Fruit of Righteousness is sown in Peace of them that make Peace : But if ye have bitter envying and Strife in your Hearts, glory not.* What ever your Pretences of Truth be, this is but lying against the Truth : This Wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, carnal, devilish * 'Tis impossible there should be true Faith without sincere Love : If I understand all mysteries, and have all knowledge, If I speak with the Tongues of Men and Angels, and have all Faith so that I could remove mountains, and were destitute of Charity, my pretensions to Religion are the meer Sound of noisy Brass or a tinkling Cymbal. † 'Tis such a Charity that suffereth long, that is not easily provoked, that beareth all things, and believeth all things, that taketh all Things in the best Sense, and thinketh no evil. 'Tis such a Charity as this that is a substantial Part of our Religion. Charity in the Heart is absolutely required to make up inward Christianity ; and the Appearance of it in the Life is a most necessary Part of Godliness. 'Tis true indeed that all Graces and Virtues are very imperfect in this present State, and there is much of Uncharitableness remaining in many a good Man :
But

* Jam. 3. 14, &c. † 1 Cor. 13. 1, 2.

But that Man can never be good that has no Charity. *Zelotus* has spent his Life in declaiming against some little Modes and Gestures used in Worship by his Fellow Christians, or in imposing some uninstituted Ceremonies on the Consciences of his Brethren. He hath stir'd up the Magistrate to persecute some of them to Prisons, and almost to Death. He flatter'd his Conscience with Hopes that his Zeal for the Church should not only render him accepted at the last Day, but provide him a large Reward: He lies now languishing upon a Bed of Sickness, on the very Borders of Eternity, and is terribly awaken'd to behold his own Mistake; while he stands within Sight of the Tribunal of *Christ* and the Face of the Judge, his former Practice appears to his Conscience in its true and frightful Shape; the Fire that hath animated him against his Brethren now flashes in his Soul, and discovers its infernal Source; now he dreads to be made an Example of the same Vengeance among Devils, with which he hath pursued his Fellow Mortals; he groans out his last Breath in bitter Agonies; crys to the God of Love for Mercy upon his departing Spirit; and expires almost without Hope. He is gone. But we leave his Soul to the Compassions of a God who can better pardon his mighty Errors, than he would forgive others in their little Mistakes.

Thus dreadfully hath this Vice of Uncharitableness prevail'd against the Honour of Christianity,

stianity, and the Peace of Mankind. Thus sacrilegiously hath it taken away one of the brightest Marks of the best Religion, and that is Love. It hath defaced the Beauty of our Holy Profession, scandalized the sacred Name that we bear, made a Slaughter-house of the Church of Christ, and deceiv'd the Souls of Men to their own Eternal Ruin.

Just as I had finish'd this Essay, *Pharissaino* hapned to come into my Chamber, and taking up the first Leaf, read the Title, and was perswaded this Discourse must be written against himself. " No (said I) there is not any
 " Man alive personally intended in these Papers, but if you please to peruse them and
 " shall apply the Characters to your Self, I hope
 " you will confess Divine Providence has led
 " you into a Conviction of your false Zeal. *Pharissaino* sat him down immediately, and with a running Eye pass'd thro' every Page. And tho' the frequent Wrinkle of his Brow discover'd his inward Chagrin and Disgust, yet he paid me many a Ceremony; and behold
 " (said he) how Language and Fancy will dress
 " up Zeal like a Monster to fright Men out of
 " their Fervour of Spirit: I have heard added
 " he that you have some Skill in Painting, pray
 " draw me the Figure of this Uncharitableness
 " in just and proper Colours; this Monster
 " which you complain has so narrow'd and
 " disgrac'd, and murder'd Christianity. I will attempt it, *Pharissaino*, if you will furnish me
 " with

with a Sheet of large Paper, and that of the fairest Kind. First I will pare it round, and reduce it to a very small Compass; then with much Ink will I stain the Whiteness of it, and deform it with many a Blot; at the next sitting I will stab it thro' rudely with an Iron Pen; and when I put the last Hand to compleat the Likeness, it shall be smear'd over with Blood.

Appendix.

IF the Scandal and Cruelty of an uncharitable Temper have not been described in Characters sufficiently frightful, it must be imputed to a Want of Skill in the Hand that attempted it, for there is no Want of formidable Features in the Vice it self. Perhaps a little and unknown Pen hath not Force enough to wage successful War against this mighty Iniquity, and the Printer in Two or Three vacant Pages permits me to call in the Aid of some great and well known Names: Names who fought against it in their Lives, who being dead yet speak, and plead heartily that it may be destroyed. They espous'd the Cause of Charity with a warm Zeal, being perswaded that it made a considerable Part of our Religion, and that the contrary Humour was destructive to all that is called Christian.

Since this Infection is not confin'd to one Party of Men, but hath spread it self wide through all Christian Societies among us, I have taken the Liberty in the foregoing Leaves to strike at it wheresoever I found it; and those who hide this Venom in their Hearts still, to whatsoever Tribe they belong, let them hear the Words of their dead Fathers: Let them blush at their own Folly, and no longer refuse to be healed.

Arch-Bishop Tillotson in his Works in Folio, Page

217, acquaints us that other Sects were distinguished by little Opinions, or by some external Rites and Observances in Religion; but our Saviour pitches upon that which is the most substantial, the most large and extensive, the most useful and beneficial, the most Human and the most Divine Quality of which we are capable, and that is Love.

And P. 126. He declares that Uncharitableness is as bad an Evidence either of a true Christian or a true Church, as a Man would wish. Damning of Men is a very hard Thing, and therefore when ever we do it, the Case must be wonderfully plain. And P. 364. We should rather be contented to err a little on the favourable and charitable Part, than to be mistaken on the censorious and damning Side. Our blessed Saviour frames his Parables with a remarkable Byass to the charitable Side, to reprove the Uncharitableness of the Jews, who positively excluded all the rest of Mankind besides themselves, from all Hopes of Salvation. An odious Temper, which to the infinite Scandal of the Christian Name and Profession hath prevail'd upon some Christians to a notorious Degree.

Dr. Owen in his Discourse of the Person of Christ, P. 222. saith, One Christian who is meek, humble, kind, patient and useful unto all, that condescends to the Ignorance, Weaknesses, and Infirmities of others, that passes by Provocations, Injuries and Contempt with Patience and with Silence, (unless where the Glory and Truth of God call for a just Vindication) that pitieth all Sorts of Men in their Failings and Miscarriages, who is free from Jealousies and evil Surmises, that loveth what is good in all Men, and all Men even wherein they are not good, nor do good, doth more express the Virtues and Excellencies of Christ than Thousands can do with the most magnificent Works of Piety or Charity (i. e. Liberality) where this Frame is wanting in them. For Men to pretend to follow the Example of Christ, and in the mean Time to be proud, wrathful, envious, bitterly zealous, calling for Fire from Heaven to destroy Men, or fetching it themselves from Hell, is to

err,
Hail

Hail unto him, and to crucifie him afresh unto their Power.

Mr. Baxter in his *Christian Directory*, Part 1. p. 40. writes thus. Surely if the very Life of Godliness lay not much in Unity and Love we should never have had such Words spoken of it as you find in Scripture. Love is to the Soul as our natural Heat is to the Body; whatever destroys it, destroys Life; and therefore cannot be for our Good. Be certain, that Opinion, Course or Motion tends to Death that tends to abate your Love to your Brethren, much more which under Pretence of Zeal provoketh you to hate and hurt them. And a little after, To limit all the Church to your Party, and deny all or any of the rest to be Christians and Parts of the Universal Church is Schism by a dangerous Breach of Charity, And P. 41. he asserts it a most dangerous Thing to a young Convert to be ensnared in a Sect: It will before you are aware possess you with a Feavourish sinful Zeal for the Opinions and Interest of that Sect. It will make you bold in bitter Invectives and Censures against those that differ from them. It will corrupt your Church-Communion and fill you, very Prayers with Partiality and Human Passions: It will secretly bring malice under the Name of Zeal into your Minds and Words: In a Word, it is a secret but deadly Enemy to Christian Love and Peace. Let them that are wiser and more Orthodox and godly than others shew it as the Holy Ghost directs them. Jam. 3. 13. &c.

The Baptists in their Appendix to their Confession of Faith, 1677. say, The Discharge of our own Consciences in point of Baptism doth not any Ways disoblige or alienate our Affections or Conversation from any others that fear the Lord; but that we may and do (as we have Opportunity) participate of the Labours of those whom God hath indued with Abilities above our selves, and qualified and called to the Ministry of the Word; earnestly desiring to approve our selves to be such as follow after Peace with Holiness; and therefore we always keep that blessed Irreconcilable or healing Word of the Apostle before our Eyes. Phil. 3. 15, 16. and at the End of the Appendix they declare that in as much as these Things (viz.) Modes of Baptism &c. are not of the Essence of Christianity, but that we agree in the Fundamental Doctrines thereof, we do apprehend there is sufficient Ground to lay aside all Bitterness and Prejudice, and in the Spirit of Love and Meekness to embrace and own each other therein; leaving each other at Liberty to perform such other Services (wherein we can do concur) as are unto God, according to the best of our Understanding.